



# The Southwester

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Serving the Southwest and Near Southeast Community

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By The Southwester Staff

The Safeway on M Street, our quadrant's only grocery source, has for years served as the anchor of the old Waterfront Mall. But now, as we all know, a different home for the supermarket is being prepared in one of the brand new buildings of the Waterfront Station development project. Safeway will open its doors at the new Fourth Street and Waterfront Metro plaza this spring.

In 2005, Safeway Inc. launched its "Lifestyle" store campaign, and the new concept is soon to reach Southwest. Craig Muckle, Safeway's eastern division manager for public affairs, described the Lifestyle store as a place to help busy consumers shop efficiently and comfortably.

"Wider aisles, inviting decor with warm ambiance and subdued lighting, premier departments, better product organization, as well as quality and freshness are key to the Lifestyle concept," Muckle told The Southwester.

Muckle elaborated on the chain's decision to stay in Southwest after the demolition and redevelopment of Waterfront Station: "If a store is doing well, we don't like to leave. They [Safe-

## A New "Lifestyle" in Southwest



Safeway's future façade on Fourth Street.

way officials] felt like they wanted to continue to serve the Southwest Community, and they are anxious to continue."

Of course, Safeway is in transition. The old store will be demolished after the move, so all investment has gone into the new location. Community concerns were addressed last fall in a town hall-type meeting. Muckle said that management heard these concerns and has been implementing changes.

"The new store is a significant investment, and management plans on being more vigilant in the future in light of what they have learned," he said. "We are definitely looking to create goodwill."

In the mean time, Safeway continues to work as a community partner in our neighborhood. It has collaborated with ANC Commissioner Ron McBee on many initiatives to benefit the community, including holiday charity contributions, an autumn food clinic and free reusable bags for those on limited income. Club card contributions also go towards local schools.

The entire community looks forward to the mid-April opening of a new retail anchor in the neighborhood.

## Southwest Development in Tune with Pop Jump

By Matthew Bevilacqua

A sizeable influx in Southwest residents last year helped contribute to what Mayor Fenty's office calls the District's largest annual population boom since World War II. Approximately 9,600 new denizens brought the city's total close to 600,000, and housing development such as that on M Street did much to attract over 500 new residents to our particular quadrant.

This past fall saw the completed renovation of The View at Waterfront, an apartment complex on M and Sixth streets formerly known as Marina View Towers. Located across the street from Arena Stage and next to Waterfront Mall (both sites still under construction), The View arrives as yet another hallmark of the area's continued revitalization.

But the population and housing spike is not limited to the M Street corridor. Condos added to Potomac Tower on Fourth Street enjoyed move-ins throughout last year, and recently installed condos at Waterfront Tower on M and Third streets began accommodating inhabitants in December.

Responsible for about 1,200 newcomers last year is Capital Riverfront, the Business Improvement District (BID) in Near Southeast currently undergoing a \$6.2 billion redevelopment plan, according to neighborhood website capitalriverfront.org. More than 5,600 of 8,200 intended residential units have already been completed, as has 6.5 million square feet of office space, a BID yearly report reveals.

Much more is expected when improved financing allows projects to restart – for instance, construction on the Waterfront that will add hundreds of economically and socially integrated housing options via both for-sale and rental apartments.

## JBG Begins L'Enfant Plaza Mall Makeover

By The Southwester Staff

Anyone who has recently traveled to the L'Enfant Plaza Metro Station on the promenade has noticed the covered entrances of now-closed businesses in the metro level mall. The mall opened in 1968 at a time when developers thought Washingtonians wouldn't mind going underground to shop. Another well-known example of this subterranean retail concept is the currently defunct tunnel system at Dupont Circle. JBG Companies decided that it was time to remodel our mall in Southwest under L'Enfant.

According to Britt Snider, one of JBG's vice presidents of development, the developer feels that "it is an appropriate time to upgrade the tenancy in order to meet today's market. We want to make sure that we are providing our office tenants and the surrounding marketplace with a high-quality retail amenity."

The project will result in 210,000 square feet of retail space and will be tackled in two phases, Snider told The Southwester. The first phase, already underway, will focus on



Rendering of planned improvements to L'Enfant Mall.

the east end of the mall, and should be completed by early 2011. The second phase, a remodeling of what is called the Center, will begin once the first phase is complete and should be ready by the end of 2012.

SmithGroup drew up the architectural plans and Clark Construction was chosen as the general contractor. East will primar-

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**2010 SWNA  
Chili Cookoff**  
**See page 3  
to register**

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## Local Government and Organizations

### **ANC Monthly Meeting: As Seen From the Pew**

Sometimes it's tough to sit through a community meeting with a straight face. You may want to chuckle, scowl, smile, cheer or just laugh out loud. But nonetheless, ANC meetings are serious business. The public may attend, but participation is limited, and the commissioners are definitely in charge of what's going on.

The Dec. 14 ANC 6D meeting was indeed serious, but there were moments that tempted the dutiful residents who attended to break their poker faces.

The meeting centered on the approval of a voluntary agreement negotiated with Safeway to support the store's request for a class B liquor license. This would allow the supermarket to sell beer and wine in their new Lifestyle store at Waterfront Station set to open in April 2010. After a very strange and convoluted discussion, and a seemingly endless series of motions to amend the agenda, the topic finally came up.

Craig Muckle, Safeway's eastern division manager for public affairs, addressed the commissioners and presented the new store's floor plan, showing that the wine and beer section is to be located near the front for an additional level of security.

Only one commissioner voiced opposition to the voluntary agreement, which had been negotiated by Coralee Farley, chair of the ANC 6D's Alcohol and Beverage Control Committee, and Commissioner Ron McBee, who represents the single member district where Safeway is located. The normally stone-faced residents at the meeting were given a chance to comment, and most spoke in favor of supporting Safeway's request, including the chairman of the Safeway Taskforce, Robert Stockwell.

Before the vote, ANC Chairman Andy Litsky thanked those who worked on the agreement. The negotiation process was followed as is customary for the ANC. He noted that the agreement on the table was the 19<sup>th</sup> draft, so much negotiation went had gone on. It was not a negotiation done in the dark, but it was not put before the community or any other body, since this is not part of the process. The agreement passed with a vote of 6-1, and Safeway was then free to approach ABRA (Alcoholic Beverage Regulation Administration) for final approval.

Chairman Litsky expressed his pleasure that Safeway will continue to be a part of our com-

munity with the following words:

"Those of us who served on the ANC six years ago when Waterfront was still in the planning phase successfully organized a lobbying campaign to ensure that any supermarket would remain within the new development — let alone a brand new store that serves beer and wine and has double the current square footage. Most people in Southwest don't know that the original Zoning Commission order giving the go-ahead for the project did not even require a supermarket to be replaced in the new development once Safeway's lease expired if another supermarket opened anywhere south of the Expressway. We knew that there were plans all along to place a large supermarket at The Yards in Near Southeast — a project wholly owned by Forest City — and that a supermarket chain would pay a hell of a premium to be assured a virtual monopoly in two neighborhoods. It was only by exerting extraordinary pressure at all levels of city government, at the Zoning Commission and NCRC [The National Capital Revitalization Corporation] and maintaining a strong negotiating posture on the second stage PUD [Planned Unit Development] that we prevailed and kept our supermarket in Southwest. Once the new Safeway opens this spring, I trust everyone will agree that it was well worth the effort."

A very confusing presentation on flood control was next on the agenda, and due to federal budgetary uncertainties regarding completion



New ANC officers, from left to right: Jane Jorgensen, David Sobelsohn, Ron McBee, and Bob Siegel.

of the levee on 17<sup>th</sup> Street and Independence Avenue SW and approval of the new FEMA map, the issue remained unresolved, much to the dismay of both the public and the commissioners.

The office of Zoning Planning-Zoning Review Taskforce presented some proposed changes to waterfront areas. None of these changes would affect the current plans for the redevelopment of the Southwest Waterfront.

The next ANC 6D meeting will be held on Jan. 11 at 7 p.m. at St Augustine's Episcopal Church, 600 M St. SW.

Before press time, the January ANC meeting took place with the election of new officers for 2010. The results were the following:

**Chairman:** Ron McBee  
**Vice Chairman:** Robert Siegel  
**Secretary:** David Sobelsohn  
**Treasurer:** Jane Jorgensen

Outgoing Chairman Andy Litsky (who did not seek re-election as Chairman) expressed his gratitude to his fellow commissioners and to the community. He cited Waterfront Station and the Waterfront Redevelopment as great accomplishments along side of the many community benefits brokered by the Commission in the past year.

### **Tommy's Beat:**

### **Progress in Southwest to Address Youth Violence and Juvenile Crime**

#### **By Councilmember Tommy Wells**

If it takes a village to raise a child, it takes a community to respond to the twin challenges of youth violence and juvenile crime.

That was one of the central lessons learned at the beginning of 2009, when I convened a task force to take a comprehensive look at these issues in Ward 6 neighborhoods.

And as 2010 begins, a group of community-based organizations and individuals in Southwest is poised to step up and confront these challenges head-on.

After the task force disclosed its recommendations, I added approximately \$280,000 in District funding to support an initiative targeting Southwest. On Dec. 1 the D.C. Children and Youth Investment Trust Corporation (CYITC) issued a request for grant proposals from qualified applicants for a Southwest Youth Development Initiative, intended to provide coordination of services for at-risk youth ages 14-24 in meaningful, positive and structured activities as an alternative to a life of crime and negative behavior in the streets.

A network of organizations has been meeting on a regular basis to coordinate this

response. Organizations and individuals that have already contributed include: the Southwest Community Forum, the East of the River Clergy Police Community Partnership, Higher Hopes to Outcomes, the Department of Parks and Recreations, Sasha Bruce Youth Works, Roving Leaders, the Office of Tommy Wells, Dale MacIver, Eve Brooks, the Westminster Church, the CYITC, the Census Bureau, JumpStart Media, Strive D.C., the SWWR Family Strengthening Collaborative, and Mosaic LOVE (Ladies of Valor Excellence).

The group has also convened most Friday and Saturday evenings since November at the King-Greenleaf Recreation Center to host young men and their friends, families and supporters in a weekly basketball tournament. The games are preceded by a group counseling session for the youth to address challenges and goals, and connect with providers and mentors who are there to help them achieve.

We have come a long way in Ward 6 since the creation of a task force in January of 2009 to the promise of concrete community-based action to address youth violence and juvenile crime at its roots. I look forward toward fulfilling this success, as well as many others, in 2010.

## **Southwest Community Calendar**

### **JANUARY**

**SAT. 16:** Men's Breakfast: 9 a.m. – 11 a.m. Christ United Methodist Church. All-You-Can-Eat Breakfast for \$5. 900 Fourth Street, SW. Enter the community room off Wesley Place.

**SUN. 17:** Martin Luther King Jr. Program at 10 a.m., Christ United Methodist Church, 900 Fourth Street, SW.

**THU. 21:** Police Service Area (PSA) 104 Monthly Community Meeting, 7 p.m. – 8:30 p.m., Carrollsburg, A Condominium (CAC), 240 M Street, SW, Thelma Martin room on first floor of the East Building.

**SUN. 24:** Grounds for Discussion, 10:45 a.m. – 12 noon. Josephus Nelson, "Where Jesus Walked: A Holy Land Tour." Includes light refreshments and facilitated Q&A. St. Augustine's Episcopal Church, 600 M St. SW. 202-554-3222 or rector@staugustinesdc.org.

**WED. 27:** Marine Barracks Open House for Planning. Accepting ideas for expansion in SE. 5 p.m. – 8 p.m., Eastern Market North Hall, Seventh St., SW.

### **FEBRUARY**

**WED. 3:** 7:30 p.m. Alcohol Beverage Control Committee, ANC6D, King Greenleaf Recreation Center, 201 N St. SW. Agenda includes current liquor license applications/changes; updates on ABRA hearings/decisions; other issues relevant to Southwest and D.C. liquor licensing. This is a committee meeting where community comment is welcome. Contact: Coralie Farlee, Chair, 554-4407; cfarlee@mindspring.com.

St. Augustine's Art & Spirit Coffeehouse, 7 p.m. Marvin A. Banks, Sr., a Master's artist and certified values educator. Coffee and desserts, followed by audience Q & A. Facilitated by

Michael Mack. Free, donations accepted for artist's honorarium. St. Augustine's Episcopal Church, 600 M St. SW. 202-554-3222 or rector@staugustinesdc.org.

**SAT. 6:** Oral History Training Workshop (interviewing). 2:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. Southwest Public Library, 900 Wesley Pl. SW

**MON. 8:** ANC6D Monthly Business Meeting, 7 p.m., St. Augustine's Church, 600 M St. SW.

**FRI. 12:** Deadline for registration, Southwest/Near Southeast Chili Cook-off. See registration for on P. 3

**SAT. 20:** 2010 Southwest/Near Southeast Chili Cook-off. 1 p.m. King Greenleaf Recreation Center, 201 N St. SW

### **WEEKLY, BIWEEKLY**

**THE KIWANIS CLUB** of Southwest Waterfront meets year-round at Christ United Methodist Church, 900 Fourth St. SW, every first and third Monday from 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

**TUESDAY AND THURSDAY EVENINGS:** The South Washington West of the River Fatherhood program will start their "Quenching the Father Thirst" sessions at St. Augustine Church, 600 M St. SW. The sessions provide a place for dads to talk, share and learn to improve relations with their wives and children. For more information call Alphonso Coles at 202-870-1885.

**MONDAY:** (Jan. 4, 11, 18, 25) 6 p.m. – 9 p.m. Blue Monday Blues (\$5) at Westminster Presbyterian Church, 400 I Street, SW.

**EVERY WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON AND EVENING:** (Jan. 6, 13, 20, 27) – Wellness Wednesdays (Free) at Westminster Presbyterian Church, 400 I Street, SW.

Please submit calendar items for February and early March, 2010 events by e-mail to thesouthwester@yahoo.com by Friday, January 29, 2009.

## **The Southwester**

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Contact The Southwester by e-mail at thesouthwester@yahoo.com for questions and to send materials and advertisements.

To contact the Southwest Neighborhood Assembly, Inc., please leave a message at 202-554-8560.

### **Southwester Staff**

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## Southwest Neighborhood Assembly Scholarship Task Force Honors 2009-2010 Scholarship Recipients

Eight of the 12 students, who received a SWNA Scholarship for this academic year, were honored at a reception at Hogate's by Kristina, Sunday, Jan. 3. They expressed thanks for the continuing support SWNA gives them throughout their college careers. In addition to a grant, students who need computers are given them through the efforts of the SWNA "Computers for Kids" program that provides training and gives each child who completes the eight week course a computer to take home.

This year Neil Pierce, long time Southwest



1st row: Mercedes Allen, McKindria Letsinger, Shanna Nichols, Tiffany Robinson. 2nd row: Vincent Omekam, Kenneth Tinsley, Quincy Peterson, Kyle Mimms. Those not in attendance are Diamond Kirkland, Patricia Harris and Natasha Rodriguez.

resident and one of the original founders of SWNA, provided a new laptop to Mercedes Allen who was also the recipient of the River Park Friends Scholarship. Thelma Jones recounted the history of the program, which grew out of efforts of the River Park Mutual Homes to support Southwest students in 1974. SWNA President Carolyn Mitchell announced the planning of an additional scholarship program to serve those who will be attending a trade school.

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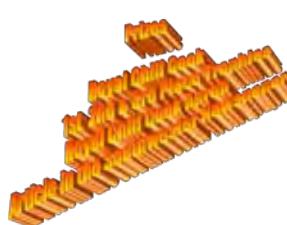
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To register for the competition, fill out the registration form and return to the King Greenleaf Recreation Center or email to [swnachili@gmail.com](mailto:swnachili@gmail.com). For additional information and guidelines contact King Greenleaf at 202-645-7454 or SWNA at 202-554-8560.

Deadline: Friday – February 12, 2010

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
1/15/2010

## Blotter

Reported by John McGraph

**H**ighlights of PSA 104 Monthly Meeting, Thursday, Dec. 17, 2009, 7 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. Riverside Condominium, 1435 Fourth St. SW

**Participants:** Lt. Nicholas Gallucci, Sgt. Newbold and MPO Thompson of PSA 104; Douglas Klein, Office of U.S. Attorney; Naomi Monk and Irv Gamza, PSA 104 meeting coordinators/facilitators; ANC Commissioner Ron McBee (6D03); Saadia Athias (SWNA, District 2); and other concerned citizens.

■ Lt Gallucci presented the November 2009 crime report which shows a consistent positive trend in crime reduction for three consecutive years in most categories, excepting burglary. Overall crime is down 12 percent. The police are following up street robberies in the vicinity of Sixth and I streets SW and Fourth and I streets SW. Arrests have been made in instances of theft from auto and burglary (illegal entry into the Arena Stage construction site) which are expected to reduce related crime.

■ A resident of 1200 Half St. SW spoke about the community response and a crime-fighting action plan following an incident (27 rounds of gunfire, 1 a.m. – 2 a.m. Nov. 29 on 1200 Half St. SW). One person was wounded and widespread property damage occurred. To date no arrests have been made. A new community patrol, in addition to increased surveillance

by the police, is in motion to protect the block. Public housing management is also looking into improve lighting. For more information, go to [1200halfstreet.blogspot.com](http://1200halfstreet.blogspot.com)

■ In response to a question about police coverage in PSA 104, Gallucci noted that his available complement of officers must respond to department-wide initiatives as well as PSA-wide crime including long-running drug activity in Southwest, domestic violence incidents and curfew violations, as well as monitor local public schools.

■ In response to questions about local evictions which appear to be drug-related (300 G St. SW) and "abandoned" property which may be used for drug activity (1233 Carrollsburg Pl. SW), Douglas Klein, Office of U.S. Attorney, promised to make additional inquiries. It was noted that other rental property in Southwest has become problematic due, in part, to the increased proportion of rental subsidies (Section 8). In a separate matter, an incident of retaliation (phone threats) was made to a resident of 1200 Half St. was discussed.

■ PSA 104 support for two community walks was discussed: Tuesday at 8 p.m. (Harbor Square) and Saturday at 5 p.m. (Potomac Place Condos). The Saturday walk was temporarily shifted to King-Greenleaf Recreation Center at 4 p.m. in response to the 1200 Half St. incident. For more information, email [1200halfstreet@gmail.com](mailto:1200halfstreet@gmail.com)

**Next Meeting:** Jan. 21 2010, 7 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. Carrollsburg, A Condominium, Thelma Martin Room, 240 M St. SW, Ground Floor.

## Ann's Beauty Supply Shop

Has moved to 125 L St. SE,  
a block from the Navy Yard  
Metro New Jersey Ave. stop,  
behind the church.

**202-554-5588**



# Accepting Applications for Spring Classes

**By Thelma D. Jones**

The Southwest Neighborhood Assembly Youth Activities Task Force (YATF) is accepting applications for its spring computer and photography classes, scheduled to begin in late February (exact date to be confirmed). Having successfully graduated approxi-

mately 40 youths in the two programs, YATF and its instructors are making welcomed changes in their programs to maximize the greatest use of time and ensure optimal results for students. Beginning with spring classes, students must be between the ages of 10-13 years old the time of enrollment in the computer class and 14-16

years old for the photography class.

Realizing the need for more individual attention and hands-on practice, computer class size accommodates a maximum of six students; the photography a maximum of eight. Also, only new students can enroll in the upcoming spring classes. Parents must accompany students to

spring orientation (date not yet announced). Questions regarding enrollment should be sent to Thelma Jones at [tjones15@verizon.net](mailto:tjones15@verizon.net); or you may call her at (202) 488-3746.

Special thanks to generous individuals and River Park Friends who provide funding for various youth programs.

## Holiday Scenes from the Neighborhood



Above, a view of the Capitol Riverfront Holiday Market on the site of the future Canal Park, Second and M streets SE.



Above right and at right, some of the outstanding lighted boats in the slips on the Waterfront.





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## Happy 2010

I am proud to identify myself as a Southwest resident, but humble enough to admit that I am a newcomer, having settled here in summer 2006. When I first arrived, I hardly grasped the four-quadrant concept of the District, and admittedly did get lost a few times, trying to find my street on the wrong side of South Capitol. That confusion quickly dissipated as I became a real Southwest resident.

When I first explored the streets of my new neighborhood, I was taken by the prospects for development gestating even then. Soon after, with a bit of community involvement, I discovered the underlying layers of pre-existing residential life and vibrancy, something which distinguished Southwest from other sectors of the city also experiencing a construction boom.

As time progressed, and my involvement

gently increased to the point of providing my neighbors with this collaborative newspaper, my gaze has been fixed on the future. New residents arrive, and the texture of the neighborhood is changing. While we preserve the positive that exists now, we are faced with a reality that our community is undergoing a transformation unseen since the urban renewal of decades ago. Whether the redevelopment of the future is successful or not is up to us: the scope of our vision, the limits of our imagination, and the energies that unite us. But one thing is certain—the New Year brings changes with it and we have to work with those changes to better ourselves and provide us and all future residents with the place we want to live in, work in and enjoy.

Happy New Year.  
Glenn Favreau

# DAR Hosts Private Tea in Honor of Dr. Dorothy I. Height

**By Thelma D. Jones**

While old man winter created a bone-chilling wind outside of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution (NSDAR) Headquarters, Southwest legend Dr. Dorothy I. Height, 97, exuded a warm and gentle spirit inside of the lovely President's General's Assembly Room during a private tea recently held in her honor. Sponsored by the D.C. Regents of the Col. John Washington-Katherine Montgomery (CJW-KM) and Judge Lynn Chapters, the tea celebrated Dr. Height's achievement as the 2009 NSDAR Medal of Honor Award.

The award, the highest honor NSDAR bestows, was presented to Dr. Height, Chair and President Emerita, National Council of Negro Women in July during DAR's annual convention. She was chosen for her outstanding efforts in advocating for women, families and civil rights. Speakers at the tea included NSDAR President General Linda Gist Calvin, D.C. DAR State Regent Priscilla Baker, D.C. CJW-KM Chapter Regent Ki Trelaine, and Judge Lynn Chapter Catherine Ball, Eastern Division Americanism.

Still commanding an audience that practically clings to every word she says, Dr. Height briefly touched on her life's journey with a sense of pride and appreciation. She reminded the



From left to right: Thelma Jones, Dr. Dorothy I. Height, Melanie "Ki" Trelaine, Pat Archer Jacob

audience of about 40 people on the importance of remembering ones past to avoid repeating it. Lauding the progress and changes of DAR and reminding us that "there's still a lot to be done", Dr. Height referenced the 1939 incidence in

which African-American opera singer Marian Anderson couldn't sing at Constitution Hall because of her skin color. "We must also work to educate our young people so that they'll have a better sense of our history," she said. Anderson

## Real Estate and Development

### RIGHTS TO ADEQUATE HOUSING: UN Special Rapporteur Visits SW

**By Vandana Sareen**

Rquel Rolnik, United Nations special rapporteur on adequate housing, visited Southwest on Nov. 8 as part of her mission to the United States, stopping by the James Creek and Syphax developments and former Arthur Capper Carrollburg site to hear testimony from residents facing housing challenges. Westminster Church on Fourth and G streets hosted the event, organized by the National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty and Friends of Capper Carrollburg, by providing a forum for the locals and screening clips from the film "Chocolate City."

Rolnik, appointed by the United Nations Human Rights Council to examine and report back on housing situation in nations around the world, focus her U.S. visit on public housing, Section 8, homelessness and the foreclosure crisis. In addition to the District, she has stopped by Chicago, Los Angeles, New Orleans, New York, South Dakota and Pennsylvania. While her commentary is not specific to any one site, the stories of struggling families could apply to those from this community.

In her key preliminary findings, Rolnik reported that despite the longstanding history of decent safe, and affordable housing in the U.S. since the passing of the 1934 National Housing Act, minority groups have not benefited on an

equal basis, and the country's poorest continue to face serious challenges in access to adequate housing. Furthermore, she explained, a new face of homelessness is emerging, consisting of working families and individuals, in the wake of the subprime mortgage crisis, further increasing the already vast gap between supply and demand of affordable housing.

With respect to the new housing policy based on mixed-income public housing sites in prime urban locations, such as Arthur Capper Carrollburg, Rolnik reported that there are many instances in which projects have been demolished and land made available to developers. But some of the land has remained vacant for years, permanently displacing the former tenants. Rolnik acknowledges that the policy goal of creating diverse and inclusive mixed neighborhoods is a positive one; however, the approach to redevelopment has overly emphasized housing as real estate rather than as a basic social need, an outlook that has served residents and families very poorly.

Rolnik has additionally investigated and reported on discrimination, accountability, transparency, participation, public responsibility and proposed preliminary recommendations. More details about the visit and her report can be found on the blog <http://restorehousingrights.org/> and the U.N. official website.

**For Recent News of Southwest D.C., Visit [www.swdcblog.com](http://www.swdcblog.com)**

### Real Estate Notes

**By Will Rich**

■ **Renovations are underway at L'Enfant Plaza's retail promenade.** Once phase one is completed in the first quarter of 2011, a food court will open near the Metro entrance with windows facing the neighboring HUD building, along with outdoor seating for restaurant patrons. At full built-out, the retail center will comprise 205,000 square feet and will complement the modernist architecture of L'Enfant Plaza with a clean, slick design. A large sculptural glass entryway will bring some natural light and visual interest into the underground shopping center. Other restaurants will be located under the glass entryway and storefronts will be scattered throughout the retail promenade.

■ **The Hirshhorn Museum and Sculptural Garden has plans to create a temporary structure twice a year (in May and October) starting in 2011.** The \$5 million inflatable structure, made of a strong vinyl material, will be in the courtyard and reach 145 feet.

■ **The Yards**, a 42-acre mixed use project near Nationals Park, has been designated a LEED Gold Certified Neighborhood Development Plan by the U.S. Green Building Council. Upon completion, The Yards will feature over 2,800 new residential units, 1.8 million square feet of office space, 400,000 square feet of retail space and a riverfront park.

■ Almost a year after closing its doors for the last time, **John Mandis' Market Inn Restaurant was demolished** in early December. The restaurant had been in business since

later performed six times at Constitution Hall, including the kick-off to her farewell tour.

While most of the attendees at the tea, which included an array of delightful hors d'oeuvres, desserts, and tea, were DAR members, Dr. Height was pleased to see many of her Southwest friends as well. Attendees from the community included Mary L. Brown, Dorothy Bryan, Shirley Haulsey, Perry and Sue Klein, H. Alice Lowery, Ezra and Laverne Naughton, and Maya Hutchinson. D.C. DAR Member and Southwest resident Pat Archer-Jacob initiated Dr. Height's nomination for the esteemed award and was also instrumental in organizing the tea.

NSDAR was founded in 1890 to promote historic preservation, education and patriotism. Its members descend from the patriots who won American independence during the Revolutionary War. With more than 165,000 members in approximately 3,000 chapters worldwide, DAR is one of the world's largest and most active service organizations. To learn more about today's DAR, visit [www.DAR.org](http://www.DAR.org).

For more information on Dr. Height's contributions to the global society, please visit [www.swdcblog.com](http://www.swdcblog.com) and see the interview that Thelma D. Jones, Southwest Neighborhood Assembly Board Member, conducted with Dr. Height in January 2009.

1959, but closed on New Year's Eve 2008. The site will most likely stay vacant until the economy improves.

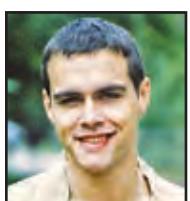
■ Construction fences have gone up around the old First District headquarters building on Fourth Street SW, and **interior demolition is underway**. Once the building is demolished, the city will build in its place the Consolidated Forensic Laboratory, which should open in 2012.

■ **The Zoning Commission approved a request to extend the PUD for the old Friendship Baptist Church site at 700 Delaware Ave. SW.** Developer Steve Tanner plans to convert the historic church into office space and construct a small residential building adjacent to it. The site's redevelopment hinges on what will eventually happen at the neighboring Randall School site, where the Corcoran is looking for a developer partner to repurpose the school building as a college and construct apartments behind the building.

■ **GSA has renewed 187,000 square feet of space at the Aerospace Building** at 901 D St. SW. The lease was renewed for a five-year term on behalf of the Administration for Children & Families of the Department of Health & Human Services.

*News from Southwest was adapted from the Southwest...The Little Quadrant That Could blog ([www.southwestquadrant.blogspot.com](http://www.southwestquadrant.blogspot.com)) and Near Southeast news was adapted from the JD Land blog ([www.jdland.com/dc](http://www.jdland.com/dc)).*

## Fitness and Nutrition



## Avoid These Exercises that Actually Make Your Waist Bigger!

By Derrick Inglut

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Many people are unaware that some of the most basic exercise routines actually work against them. Even many personal trainers may be unfamiliar with the nasty consequences of these exercises, as I witness them given to clients all of the time.

Pros know contest shape means symmetry. Symmetry is the visual balance from one muscle group to another, which is usually expressed in inches. Top symmetry points are awarded to those who can develop the greatest sweeps while maintaining the smallest waist. Bodybuilder or not, we all want a small waist to make the rest of our body look good. The following exercises are actually exercises that can build the waist and should be avoided.



## Allen A. Flood, M.D.

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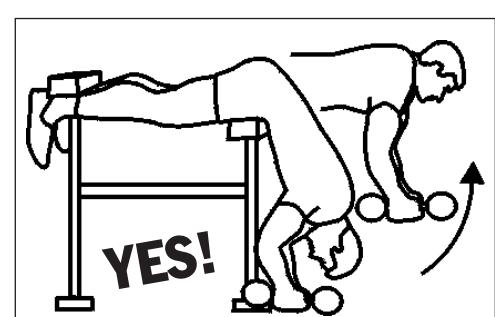
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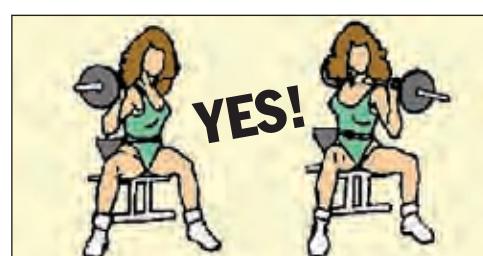
### Substitute with:

**Back Extensions** – This exercise works the same muscle groups as a straight legged dead lift, only with less resistance. If back extensions are not an option for you due to a health issue, continue the dead lifts, but use a lighter weight and increase the reps.



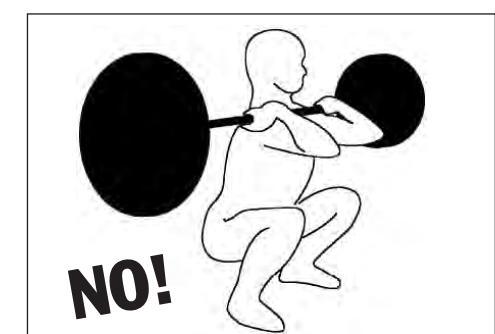
### 1. Avoid:

**Side Bends** – This exercise is designed to strengthen the obliques – also known as those little V-shaped muscles around a lean waistline. It works, alright – too well! High resistance can bulk the oblique and add size directly to the sides of the waist. Muscle or not, that's no good!



### 3. Avoid:

**Squats** – Squats do a great job strengthening the entire leg. However, the bone support underneath all of that mass comes to a very narrow two inches or so by the lower lumbar disks (waist). This leaves the muscles around that area to support the rest of the weight. As a result of high stress and resistance, the waistline thickens to support the extra weight on the shoulders. Think of trying to balance a brick on top of a straw. What happens there? The weakest area, the middle, will fold. To keep that scenario from affecting the body, large amounts of muscle develop around the area of highest strain – your waist.



### Substitute with:

**Standing or seated twists** – Twists are much lower in intensity and use the muscle without abusing the muscle. Be sure that when doing the twist, you spread your legs wide and keep your hips locked still. Only your shoulders should be moving. If your hips are moving, you're twisting your knees, and that's not only ineffective – it's dangerous!



### Substitute with:

**Seated Leg Press** – Because you are essentially performing a squat while sitting down, much of the resistance is taken off the lumbar region and placed elsewhere – your legs. I would like to note that a leg press would require a slightly higher weight than a squat to develop the muscle comparably, since while sitting down you are no longer lifting the addition of your body weight

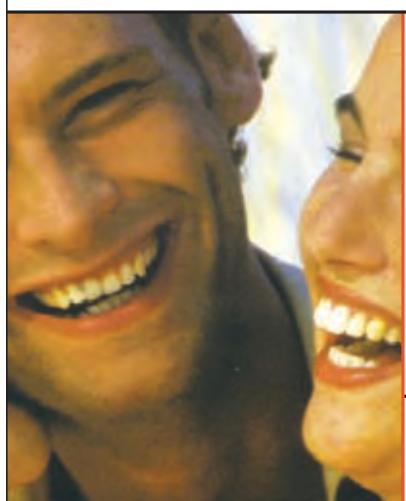
### 2. Avoid:

**Heavy Dead Lifts** – One of the muscles the dead lift works is the Erector Spinae, also known as the lower back. The opposing muscle for stabilization is the abdominals. A very heavy weight has been known to thicken the abdominal area.



Derrick Inglut is a personal trainer who writes on fitness and nutrition. His website is [derrickinglut.com](http://derrickinglut.com).

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Center of L'Enfant Mall as it looks now.

## Mall

From p. 1

ily function as a food court, and Center will be reserved for fashion and general service retail with some food options and seating under the atrium.

The vast majority of the work will be interior renovation. The one exception is the plan to replace an existing pyramid in the center of the upper plaza with a much larger atrium to allow more light to enter the mall space. Technically, the mall is above ground level, but below the plaza level. The increased luminosity is sought to rejuvenate the space.

The availability of local retail is of great interest to Southwest residents, and not just services for daytime workers. The Southwester asked Snider to elaborate on plans for retail at L'Enfant. He clarified:

"We intend to bring in more nationally recognized tenants for the entire retail. As you mention in your question, our most significant

consumer base consists of the daytime employees who work within one mile of L'Enfant Plaza. While we need to continue to serve those consumers, we would also like to see the life of this retail space extend beyond 9 a.m. – 5 p.m., Monday to Friday. We want to bring in retailers who can better serve the local residents and also the tourists visiting the nearby hotels on weekends. We very much understand the need to expand the consumer base and the service offerings. That concept is important for both the property owner and the local residents."

JBG is an equity holder in the Southwest Waterfront Redevelopment. While JBG told The Southwester that there will be no specific connection between the investment in the L'Enfant mall and the Waterfront, they also affirmed their support for The National Capital Planning Commission's Monumental Framework Plan and its desire to enhance connections between the Mall and the Waterfront.

"We believe this is a vital connection for the city that creates a means to revitalize all of Southwest," Snider said.

## Reality Check: Ringing in the New Year Debt Free

By Essita Duncan

**D**espite the state of our present economy, with our finances held together by a shoestring, many consumers probably shopped until they dropped this past holiday season. Without giving it a second thought, we had a blast from Black Friday to New Year's Eve hitting the local malls for the best buys in town. Many of us were ordering gifts as if the rich and famous had hired us as personal shoppers. Shoot, if our credit card were a person, he would probably have whiplash and a headache from the countless quick draws from our wallet.

Now that New Year's Day has come and gone and the champagne put away, consumers are waking up from their shopping-induced comas and hazily staring at their credit card bills and collection notices, wondering what happened. For some, it may have been overspending, while for others a loss of employment, unexpected illness or family crisis that forced dependence on credit cards. Regardless of how any of us ended up here, we all want to get out of debt sooner rather than later.

As you start the New Year with visions of a debtless life dancing around in your head, don't be taken for a ride by all these debt relief companies promising a miracle for a small fee. Do your homework first before you visit a debt relief

company, credit counselor or bankruptcy attorney. Check the reputation of the company or attorney. Determine your objective and whether the company or attorney has experience. Don't be afraid to ask for references and past results. You don't want to find yourself spending your limited funds on a solution that doesn't meet your needs.

While there is no magic wand to wave over our debt and, *poof*, it's gone, we all can start reducing and managing our debt this year if we start making smarter choices. Make a budget and stick to it. Cash, if available, is always better than credit. If it's nonessential and you can't pay cash, then go without it. Pay more than the minimum payment each month. Negotiate with credit card companies, but if you find the offer will still land you in default or bankruptcy court a month or two later, consider talking to a bankruptcy attorney. An attorney may be able to help you eliminate debt under Chapter 7 or repay your debt under the protections of the bankruptcy court under Chapter 13. Know your rights. Become familiar with the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act. Lastly, communicate, communicate and communicate. You can't get out of debt by exercising your right to remain silent.

*This does not constitute legal advice and does not establish an attorney-client relationship. Essita Duncan is an attorney in private practice who can be contacted at eduncan@duncandefense.com.*



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## Unity Health Care Southwest Health Center

**T**he Washington Nationals Dream Foundation continued their good works in Southwest with the refurbishment of Unity Health Care's Southwest Health Center on Dec. 10 and 11. Through the Foundation's partnership with Rebuilding Together, D.C., volunteers from the Nationals Front Office were able to provide carpentry work and fresh paint for the center located just blocks from Nation-

als Park.

The Washington Nationals Dream Foundation provided a grant for the necessary painting and carpentry materials. The Nationals Facility Management Crew, led by Ballpark Operations Director Matt Blush, performed tasks requiring skilled labor. This included the installation of a children's reading corner in the waiting area, the construction of a reception desk and counter-

tops, ceiling repair and the addition of special molding to neatly encase loose computer and data wiring along the waiting room ceiling. Volunteers from throughout the Nationals front office then spent a day painting two main waiting rooms, hallways, a lab and the center's conference room.

"We had a great time out at the Southwest Health Center, a truly wonderful facility which treats all District residents regardless of



Working in the waiting room (photo courtesy of Washington Nationals).



Volunteers pose with Screech outside health center (photo courtesy of Washington Nationals).

their ability to pay," said Chartese Burnett, Nationals vice president of communications and community relations. "We hope that the renovations we provided, along with the bright and cheery paint colors will make the time the people spend here a little easier."

Nationals players and front office staff will visit the Southwest Health Center as part of their Winter Caravan, which will take place January 27-30. Players will interact with employees and patients during their visit, sign autographs and pose for photos.

## Spiritual Life

## Grounds for Discussion: “Where Jesus Walked: A Holy Land Tour”

By Elaine Graves

**O**n Sunday Jan. 24, Josephus Nelson will discuss “Where Jesus Walked: A Holy Land Tour,” based on the pilgrimage to the Holy Land led by Bishop John Bryson Chane, Diocese of Washington, and Rev. John Peterson, canon for global justice and reconciliation at the Washington National Cathedral. With 31 other pilgrims, he visited Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Nazareth, Galilee, Ramallah and Jordan. In addition to visits to the holy sites, he toured schools, hospitals and local parishes that showcase the ministry of the Anglican Province of Jerusalem. The pilgrimage began on Oct. 22 and ended on Nov. 4.

St. Augustine’s Grounds for Discussion series begins at 10:45 a.m. Light refreshments and an audience Q&A follow the presentation at St. Augustine’s Episcopal Church, 600 M St. SW.

“As a practicing Christian, the Bible, the Holy land have fueled my imagination over the



years, and I thought that traveling with the Bishop Chane and fellow Episcopalians to Israel and Jordan would be an eye-opening and inspiring experience,” said Nelson, a member of St. Augustine’s since 1977.

Also a Library of Congress staff member since 1972, Nelson works as a senior writer/editor in the Office of the Librarian. Born in Tennessee, Nelson grew up in Detroit and earned a B.A. in English Literature at Wayne State University, followed by a M.A. in Library Science at the University of Michigan. In 1991, he received his Master of Studies, History, from the University of Oxford.

Grounds for Discussion is a community speaker forum offered on the last Sunday of each month from 10:45 a.m. to

noon. It focuses on local, national and global issues that challenge us both as citizens and people of faith, according to the Rev. Martha Clark, priest-in-charge at St. Augustine’s. Guest speakers will include writers, educators and civic and church leaders.



Saadia Athias with local youth.

## YATF Selects Saadia Athias as Chairperson

By Thelma D. Jones

**T**he Southwest Neighborhood Assembly Youth Activities Task Force (YATF) unanimously elected SWNA District II Board Member Saadia Athias as chairperson, succeeding Co-Chairs Beryl C. Rice and Rick Bardach who had served in that capacity since mid-2007.

A thirty year resident of Southwest, Athias has been actively involved in serving her district which includes the Waterside Mall, Department of Motor Vehicles, Lansburgh Park, Randall School and the new Metropolitan Police Department. She works closely with the Residents’ Councils Offices for Syphax, Greenleaf and James Creek, where the vast majority of Southwest children live. She also managed a summer program for the Mayor’s Summer Youth Employment Program and sponsored youth activities at Southeastern University.

In addition, Athias worked closely with Ward 6 Councilmember Tommy Wells in helping to ensure that Amidon-Bowen School was open for summer programs last year. She is also actively involved with the PSAs and Citizens Advisory Council and is the founder of the Southwest Safety Walkers, whose regular hikes identify challenges and concerns that help to promote and ensure our community’s safety and welfare.

On a different front, Athias has been involved in helping to restore Lansburgh Park, now available for community enjoyment. A proud and recent graduate of Southeastern University with a Master’s in Public Administration and a B.S. in Early Childhood Education, Athias has also been instrumental in keeping the community abreast of her alma mater’s status. She has more than 12 years of experience in federal security.

In accepting the position, Athias shared her vision with YATF members, including the wish to further develop resources for Southwest-Near Southeast youth and the community at large, identify facilities to operate the essential programs for community youth, find financial resources for funding the youth programs on a more sustainable basis, and work more closely with community stakeholders to ensure greater coordination of services, and thereby avoiding duplication of efforts and the challenge of going after the same limited pool of money.

Saadia welcomes additional YATF members or volunteers. If you are interested in joining YATF or volunteering for a specific program or project, please email Saadia Athias at saadenterprise@msn.com or call her at (202) 554-5863.

Created in 1982, YATF finds support in a group of volunteers dedicated to the welfare and personal development of community youth through ongoing cultural, technological, recreational and educational programs. Committed to advocacy and the bringing together of people and entities with similar concerns, YATF will begin a more strategic focus on encouraging and creating a forum for stakeholders to speak as one community on the needs of youth, and the services required to fulfill those needs. Reaching hundreds of youth and parents annually, YATF’s efforts continue to make a positive impact in the community, reflected by the youth’s enthusiasm and the overall general recognition and vote of confidence the task force continues to receive in support of our efforts and programs.



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## † Spiritual Calendar †

### Neighborhood Religious Services

#### Bethel Pentecostal Tabernacle of the Assemblies of God

60 I St. SW  
**Sunday:** 10:45 a.m.; Friday: Prayer and Bible Study: 8 p.m.

#### St. Augustine's Episcopal Church

600 M St. SW  
**Sunday:** 9:30 a.m.  
**Tuesday:** 6:30 p.m. Evening Prayer

#### St. Dominic Catholic Church

603 E St. SW  
**Saturday:** 5:15 p.m.; Sunday 8 a.m., 10:45 a.m., 12:15 p.m. (Spanish), and 5:15 p.m.  
**Weekdays:** 8 a.m. and 12:10 p.m.

#### St. Matthew's Baptist Church

1105 New Jersey Ave. SE  
**Sundays:** 8 a.m. Sunday School, 9:05 a.m. Devotions, 9:20 a.m. Worship  
**Tuesdays:** 7 p.m. Prayer Meeting, 7:35 p.m. Bible Study  
Youth Bible Study 7 p.m. the first Friday of each month

#### St. Matthew's Lutheran Church

Worshiping at First Trinity Lutheran Church, 501 Fourth St. NW at Judiciary Square  
**Sunday:** 10:30 a.m.  
**Wednesday:** 6:45 p.m. Sing & Rejoice

#### St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church

14 M St. SE  
**Sunday:** 8 a.m.  
**Mon., Tues., Thur., Fri.:** 12:10 p.m.

#### Second Baptist Church

1200 Canal St. SW  
**Sunday:** 8 a.m. and 10:45 a.m.  
**Wednesday:** Prayer Meeting 7 p.m.

#### Riverside Baptist Church

Seventh St. and Maine Avenue SW  
**Sunday:** 10 a.m. with Bible Study at 9 a.m.

#### Westminster Presbyterian Church

400 I St. SW  
**Sunday:** 11 a.m.

#### Galilee A.M.E. Church

Worshipping at St. Augustine’s Episcopal Church, 600 M St. SW  
**Sunday:** 2 p.m.  
**Wednesday:** Bible Study 7:30 p.m.

#### Christ United Methodist Church

900 Fourth St. SW  
**Sunday:** 10 a.m.

#### Friendship Baptist Church

900 Delaware Ave. SW  
**Sunday:** 11 a.m.

## Arts and Culture

## Artist and Values Educator at St. Augustine's Coffeehouse

**M**arvin A. Banks, Sr., a master's artist and values educator, is the featured artist for the Art & Spirit Coffeehouse on Wednesday, Feb. 3, at 7 p.m. at St. Augustine's Episcopal Church, 600 M St. SW.

He describes his artwork from a realist perspective, producing portraits of people, animals, still life and landscapes. But he also paints in abstraction and surrealism. Banks' artistic style reflects his philosophy that "you paint for the sheer enjoyment and for the sake of the arts." Trained and experienced in both oil and acrylic, Banks prefers the latter.

Born and raised on a farm in Greene and Lenoir counties in Eastern North Carolina, he relocated to the District in 1969 upon graduation from high school. He holds a B.A. in Arts Education and a Masters in Adult Education from the University of the District of Columbia (UDC). During 36 years with the D.C. Public Schools, Banks assumed various leadership roles. He served as an investigator, looking into crimes in the public schools and subsequently served as a classroom teacher in visual arts for 20 years. When values education was mandated system-wide in DCPS, Banks was among the first certified and served for several years.

He emphasized positive values to inner-city schoolchildren emphasizing respect, socialization, communications, honesty, interdependence and integrity through encouraging students to interpret what feelings and actions they see in the artwork. He led discussions about where the students are in their lives and why they need to set positive goals.

Assuming a more challenging yet creative role, he served as an art teacher for alternative education for Level 1-3 students who were both academically challenged and expelled from regular school. As a requirement of his alternative education experience, Banks became a certified reading specialist and was certified in conflict resolution.

Contracted by the Corcoran Gallery, Banks



Marvin A. Banks displays his artwork, *Dying Iris*.

developed and presented values-infused arts education to all DCPS. In addition, he presented values education programs to civic organizations such as the Southwest Neighborhood Assembly Youth Activities Task Force, churches, after school programs, among others, targeting at-risk students. No stranger to the Southwest community, Banks worked part-time as a director in the mid-1990s for a Southwest tutorial program.

Currently in retirement, he enjoys painting, listening to music, and doting over his grandchildren, niece and nephews. But as a lifelong believer in "always trying to help people," he also volunteers to teach values education in juvenile institutions and organizations. His secret to relating to young people comes from being the father of 11 – seven sons and four daughters – all leading well-adjusted lives.

The Southwest Episcopal Church's Art & Spirit Coffeehouse series opens on the first

Wednesday of each month to showcase local artists in their various media as they perform and share how their faith, art and social worldview intersect, according to the Rev. Martha Clark, Priest-in-Charge at St. Augustine's. Donations will be accepted to help provide honorariums for the guest artists. Contact [rector@staugustinesdc.org](mailto:rector@staugustinesdc.org), 202-554-3222 or visit [www.staugustinesdc.org](http://www.staugustinesdc.org) for further information. (Article by Thelma Jones, with input from Elaine Graves.)

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## Kids and Schools

## DCPS Saturday Scholar Program Begins Jan. 23

**By Meg Brinkman**

**A**midon-Bowen will be a site for the Saturday Scholars Program, designed to provide tailored instruction in reading and math through a fun, interactive program that supports a normal school week of work. It will run from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. for 11 Saturdays, ending April 17.

In addition to academic instruction, children will receive breakfast and a snack. Dedicated

DCPS teachers run this program, offering it at no cost.

For the program to be a success parents must commit to enroll their students and ensure that they attend every session on time. Registration forms are available at Amidon-Bowen. If you have other questions, contact Margaret Legaspi-Foong, manager of Saturday Scholars, at 202-719-6633 or margareth.legaspi-foong@dc.gov.



## Amidon-Bowen to Make a Big Push toward Perfect Attendance

**By Meg Brinkman**

**D**ata from school systems all over the country show that having students in their desks on time, everyday, is a powerful tool to improve test scores, behavior and, most important, a positive attitude toward learning. Amidon-Bowen had a 93 percent attendance rate last year. The goal for all DCPS this year is 95 percent. Attendance has a direct effect on learning across the board and translates into performance on tests, one of the standards for "No Child Left Behind."

Almeta Hawkins, principal at Amdon-Bowen, expressed concern about the increased number of children who've been tardy. Not only does it result in a loss of learning time,

but it disrupts the class.

Amidon-Bowen is launching a program to recognize student and their parents who have perfect attendance each month. Pictures of the winners in November can be seen in the hallway near the main office's entrance. Parents will receive a beautiful photograph of their child and a certificate expressing the role that parents play in getting their children to school on time.

### November Perfect Attendance Stars

Mariah Greene  
Jennifer Zhou  
Chinwe Melifonwu  
Jamyia Williams  
Aaliyah Wilkinson  
Aliya Solomon

A'Mee Barnes  
Vy Ngo  
Sharika Scott-Hester  
Anastasia Smith  
Deijah Smith  
Wynter Jackson  
Makai Delaney  
Jeremiah Evans  
Quantae Robinson  
Michael Crawford  
Caron Jackson  
Jonovan Smith  
Marc Davis  
Gary Robinson Jr.  
Justin McFadden  
Jeffery Crawford  
Kyree Jenkins  
Brandon Webster  
Jabri Williams  
Tywaun Wills  
Jabari Champion  
Antwon Evans

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## Parents' Guide to Keeping Morning Order (And Your Sanity)

### The night before you and your children should:

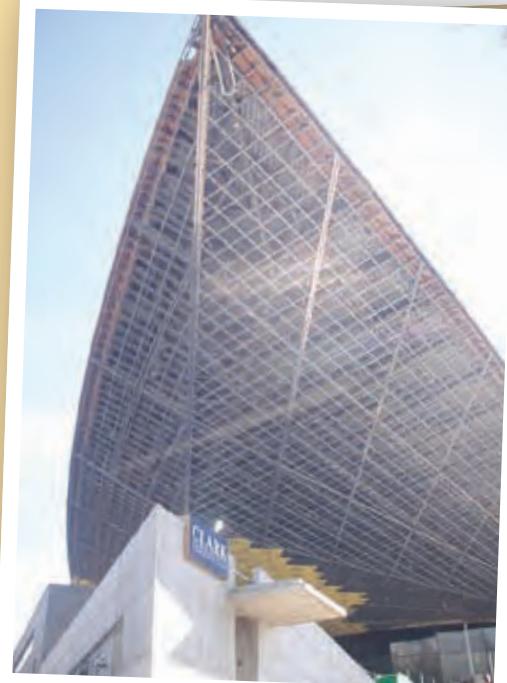
- Put the book bags, with completed homework inside, in a special place ready to go.
- Sign all permission slips or other papers and put them in the book bag.
- Agree on what to wear and put it in a convenient place.
- Set the alarm.
- Get a good night's sleep- **both of you!**



### In the morning:

- Send everyone off to school **on time** with a smile. Remember the biggest influence on your children's attitude toward school and learning is **you**.

## Scenes of Progress in 2010



Above, demolition of the old police station began in early January to make way for the new Consolidated Forensic Lab on Fourth and E streets.

The dramatic roof point of Arena Stage's new building, at left, takes shape on M Street. Arena announced there will be a black tie gala on the Oct. 25, 2010 and a Homecoming Day open house for the public Oct. 24 to celebrate their return to Southwest in their new state-of-the-art complex.

The historic Market Inn, below, which closed its doors a year ago, was torn down. The empty lot on E Street awaits future plans.



## Sports

## Focus on Locals at Nationals Ballpark: James Miles

If you haven't heard of James Miles, it is because he hasn't done any enormous attention-grabbing. He hasn't tried to, either. He sticks to the little things, providing direction for young football players, teaching them how to carry not only a football but themselves throughout their lives. If you have met him, you will never forget him. A charismatic 51-year-old lifelong Southwest resident, Miles just wants to make you smile.

He does the little things that make a big difference. That's what he brings as a worker in the Exxon Strike Zone at Nationals Park, a hands-on physics lesson of force, torque and trajectory crammed into a batter's box and radar gun.

Miles has spent countless hours working at Nationals Park, witnessing kids trying to strikeout simulated professionals and watching boyfriends trying to show off to their girlfriends, declaring they can throw 90 mph. They are lucky if they top 50, and usually leave after surrendering a simulated home run. The kids enter the game with enough confidence to throw 1000 mph but not enough power to actually make the

machine feel their wrath. The radar gun doesn't register balls that move slower than 24.

But Miles is a fix it man—the Nationals appointed him the head maintenance technician for the Exxon Strike Zone—so he quickly solved the kids' dilemma. The solution is simple. It is called the hero rule.

Coach Miles gives himself about six to eight chances to instruct the young baseball enthusiasts how to pitch properly and throw a strike. After about the six or seventh try, if their pitches haven't registered then he lets the parents step in to be the "hero."

On one particular evening, a mother came in with her two children. Miles could tell immediately the little boy loved to compete. He threw the ball as hard as he could, but it was like throwing a piece of sand at a brick wall. Nothing happened. After the tenth try, the hero rule was implemented. The mom stepped right up and struck out Alex Rodriguez on three pitches. It made her day and her son smiled ear to ear. She came back two days later with her husband.

"You could tell she was bragging the whole

time to her husband like, 'I bet you can't do it,'" Miles said. "The husband stepped up, all confident but he couldn't strike out Alex Rodriguez."

That's why Miles loves working at Nationals Park: the atmosphere, the kids, the smiles, the Exxon Strike Zone, the fans, the fun. And the list goes on.

"I have a lot of fun with the fans," Miles said. "Just being in the ballpark, in that festive atmosphere is energizing. It's a fun, happy atmosphere. It is a job that really isn't a job."

Miles' job that's actually a job is as a deputy clerk in the mental health/mental retardation division at the D.C. Superior Court. He is a self-described sports nut who has a passion for coaching the fierce and ferocious, 65-pound, 7-9 year-old football players at the King-Greenleaf Recreation Center. He never has turned down a coaching opportunity at the Exxon Strike Zone, either. And that's why he loves being a Nationals employee and why he is finally glad the National Pastime is back in the Nation's Capital.

**Gloria C. Harper-Simon**

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## 2010 NatsFest Preview

It is never too early to get your game face on at Nationals Park, especially when the Nats Caravan barnstorms through the District, Maryland and Virginia. The 2010 Nationals Caravan gets the wheels turning on Jan. 26 and it paves the path for NatsFest on Jan. 31 at Nationals Park. It may only be January, the temperature may be hovering near freezing and there may be occasional snow showers, but hey – the baseball season is just around the corner.

So if you are in need of some warm, fuzzy thoughts to soothe the soul on these blustery winter nights, just keep in mind that Nationals pitchers and catchers report at the end of February. That thought can warm up any frozen face.

The Nationals officially open Nationals Park on April 5 against the Phillies, but the unofficial start to the season is the last week in January with NatsFest—baseball's version of a grassroots convention. NatsFest rallies the fan base and



Pitching like the pros. (Photo courtesy of Washington Nationals)

gives each fan the opportunity to get autographs, photos and meet with the players and coaching staff.

Last year was the first annual NatsFest and fans came out in droves to greet players with a warm Washington welcome. The excitement for the Nationals and the beginning of the baseball season was evident with each smile.

The Nationals have an even bigger, better NatsFest for 2010. For more information, visit [nationals.com](http://nationals.com) or call 202.675.NATS (6287).



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